

Proclamation 8784 of March 16, 2012

**National Poison Prevention Week, 2012***By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Unintentional drug overdose, exposure to harmful chemicals, and other types of accidental poisoning claim thousands of lives every year. On the 50th anniversary of National Poison Prevention Week, I encourage all Americans to help protect their loved ones by identifying poisoning hazards at home; using, storing, and disposing of medication safely and effectively; and learning more about how to prevent and respond to poison emergencies.

Though we have dramatically reduced the incidence of poisoning among children, accidental exposure to drugs and medicines, typical household chemicals, and other dangerous substances continues to threaten the health of our Nation's youth—particularly those under the age of six. Parents and caregivers can help prevent poisoning by storing chemicals and medication in locked or childproof cabinets beyond their children's reach, and by safely disposing of unused or expired prescription drugs. To find more information and safety tips, visit: [www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov).

Tragically, the mortality rate from unintentional drug overdose climbs higher every year. Misuse and abuse of prescription painkillers among teens and adults drives this trend. As we work to address this serious public health issue, we must do more to educate parents, young people, patients, and prescribers about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and the steps they can take to prevent it. Because the majority of individuals who abuse prescription pain relievers obtain them from friends or family, all of us can take action by using medications only as directed by a health care provider and removing old or unneeded medications from our homes. Additional resources on safe drug disposal are available at [www.FDA.gov](http://www.FDA.gov) and [www.DEADiversion.USDOJ.gov](http://www.DEADiversion.USDOJ.gov).

In the event of an accidental poisoning, rapid response can make all the difference. The national poison help hotline is available to respond to poison emergencies and provide essential information 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-222-1222.

To encourage Americans to learn more about the dangers of accidental poisonings and to take appropriate preventive measures, the Congress, by joint resolution approved September 26, 1961, as amended (75 Stat. 681), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week of March each year as "National Poison Prevention Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 18 through March 24, 2012, as National Poison Prevention Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by taking actions to protect their families from hazardous household materials and from misuse of prescription medications.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

**Proclamation 8785 of March 19, 2012**

**National Day of Honor**

*By the President of the United States of America*

*A Proclamation*

Nine years ago, members of the United States Armed Forces crossed the sands of the Iraq-Kuwait border and began one of the most challenging missions our military has ever known. They left the comforts of home and family, volunteering in service to a cause greater than themselves. They braved insurgency and sectarian strife, knowing too well the danger of combat and the cost of conflict. Yet, through the dust and din and the fog of war, they never lost their resolve. Demonstrating unshakable fortitude and unwavering commitment to duty, our men and women in uniform served tour after tour, fighting block by block to help the Iraqi people seize the chance for a better future. And on December 18, 2011, their mission came to an end.

Today, we honor their success, their service, and their sacrifice. In one of our Nation's longest wars, veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn wrote one of the most extraordinary chapters in American military history. When highways became mine fields and uncertainty waited behind every corner, service members rose to meet the task at hand with unmatched courage and determination. They learned languages and cultures, taking on new roles as diplomats and development experts to improve the communities where they served. Their strength toppled a tyrant, and their valor helped build opportunity in oppression's place. Across nearly 9 years of conflict, the glory of their service—as well as the contributions of other members of the U.S. Government and our coalition partners—always shone through.

The war left wounds not always seen, but forever felt. The burden of distance and the pain of loss weighed heavily on the hearts of millions at home and overseas. Behind every member of our military stood a parent, a spouse, or a son or daughter who proudly served their community and prayed for their loved one's safe return. For wounded warriors, coming home marked the end of one battle and the beginning of another—to stand, to walk, to recover, and to serve again. And, in war's most profound cost, there were those who never came home. Separated by time and space but united by their love of country, nearly 4,500 men and women are eternally bound; though we have laid them to rest, they will live on in the soul of our Nation now and forever. To them, to their families, and to all who served, we owe a debt that can never be fully repaid.

When we returned the colors of United States Forces-Iraq and the last of our troops set foot on American soil, we reflected on the extraordinary service and sacrifice of those who answered our country's call. Their example embodied that fundamental American faith that tells us no mission is